deliver the above quantity of gas. the scope of the agreement also includes Bangladesh.

Wells drilled in Tripura

1179. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMA-CHANDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the wells drilled in Tripura have the best success ratio of gas production in the country;

(b) if so, the steps by Government to explore and drill wells in Tripura; and

(c) whether oil has also been discovered in Tripura, besides gas and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Presently, one seismic party and three drilling rigs of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) are in op eration in Western Tripura.

Under the Seventh Round Exploration Bidding, block AA-ON/3, falling in Tripura has been awarded by Government of India to M/s. Okland Oil Company, USA and M/s Rexwood Corporation, USA.

A Memorandum of Undertanding has been signed by ONGC with M/s. UNOC-AL International Corporation, USA for joint study to investigate the commerical exploitation of established reserves and to determine the potential for new reserves in Tripura.

(c) So far no oil reserves have been discovered in Tripura.

Development of Infrastructure for IOC

1180. PROF. NAUNIHAL SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government needs to develop infrastructure for the Indian Oil Corporation on a large scale:

(b) if so, the details of the plans, including the sources of finances;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the IOC is planning to build a huge refinery at Panipat (Haryana); and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (d) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Marketing permission to Foreign Companies

1181. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to permit foreign petroleum companies to operate in the . marketing segment;

(b) if so, the details there of; and

(c) the names of the foreign companies who have shown interest for investment in this sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) Yes, Sir. In line with the liberalised economic policy of the Govt., private' parties including national/multinationals were allowed to import and market some petroleum products like LPG, kerosene, LSHS and CBFS, lubricants at market determined prices.

(b) and (c) Public Sector Oil Companies have formed joint venture companies for the development of various infrastructure facilitities for the import, storage, bottling and marketing of LPG and other petroleum products. The details of these Joint Venture Companies are as under:

(i) Indian Oil taking Ltd. : To provide infrastructure for storage of petroleum products in the country, Indian Oil Corporation Ltd., and